

IN THE LOOP

with LINK

Updates, Observations & Anecdotes for Parents
from Julianne Allen,
OFCS Family & Community LINK Coordinator

PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES & IMPORTANT DATES*



- 10/5 OFHS Common App Tips for Seniors/Parents- 7 PM Rm. 606
- 10/6 OFMS Washington DC Parent Mtg.- 7 PM @OFMS
- 10/7 OFMS Student Council Dance- 5:30 PM @OFMS
- 10/8 NEOEA Day - NO SCHOOL
- 10/12 OFMS PTA Meeting- 7 PM @OFMS
- 10/14 OECPTA Meeting- 7 PM @ECC
- 10/14 OFHS College Scholarship/Essay Writing for Students- 7 PM
- 10/14 FL-ECC PTA Breakfast Buddies- 7:00 AM @ECC**
- 10/15 FL-ECC PTA Breakfast Buddies- 7:00 AM @ECC**
- 10/18 FL-ECC PTA Breakfast Buddies- 7:00 AM @FL**
- 10/19 FL-ECC PTA Breakfast Buddies- 7:00 AM @FL**
- 10/20 OFHS Underclass Picture Day
- 10/20 OFIS PTA Meeting- 7 PM @OFIS
- 10/21 ECC Preschool Curriculum Night- 6:30 PM
- 10/22 FL-ECC PTA Breakfast Buddies 7:00 AM @FL**
- 10/25 OFHS PTA Meeting- 7:00 PM @OFHS
- 10/26 Falls-Lenox/ECC PTA Mtg- 7:00 PM @ECC
- 10/28 ECC Preschool Fall Fest Celebration
- 10/28 OFIS Halloween Parade/Parties- 1:30 PM
- 10/29 ECC Kindergarten Fall Fest Celebration
- 10/29 Falls-Lenox Halloween Parties- 1:15 PM



*Some events may be virtual. Contact your building principal
**Registration required. or visit www.ofcs.net for details.

LINGO YOU SHOULD KNOW

Helping non-educators everywhere understand what the heck stuff means

DRA- Developmental Reading Assessment

The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is an individually administered assessment of a child's reading capabilities, used to identify a student's reading level, accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. Teachers use the DRA results to identify students who may need intervention services or help with a specific skill, to form guided reading groups, and for instructional planning purposes.

The assessments take place 3 times per year in grades K-3 and the results are sent home to parents. Don't just file these away! Be sure to look through the results and keep track of how your child is doing. If you don't see progress in your child's reading level, or have questions about what the results mean, contact your child's teacher. Now that you know what DRA means, you can feel confident that you know what you are talking about! Easy-peasy!

TheFamilyDinnerProject.org

A hobby of mine is looking for recipes to clip and save so that I can pretend I might someday make them. Hey, it could happen! Fortunately, The Family Dinner Project is WAY more than recipes! It is a nonprofit initiative started in 2010 that "champions family dinner as an opportunity for family members to connect with each other through food, fun and conversation about things that matter."

The site contains family-friendly recipes, activities, and conversation starters (in case your kids reply "nothing" when you ask them what they did today at school!) Research has shown that sharing a family meal regularly is linked to all kinds of positive traits and behaviors in kids like higher GPAs and self-esteem, and lower rates of substance abuse.

It's not easy to get on the same schedule or find the time, but family dinner is worth the effort! Check out the site for inspiration and make family dinner a priority! (YES, TAKEOUT COUNTS!) <https://thefamilydinnerproject.org/>



TRICK OR TREAT

Things That Are Scary (but don't have to be!)

by Julianne Allen

Family & Community LINK Coordinator

Boo!

This is the month where many families decorate with spider webs and jack-o-lanterns and not-so-scary scarecrows. My kids call it "spooky season" and I have to agree that as the school year kicks into gear and the newness wears off, it is getting a bit spooky over here. Have your kids started to "FALL" into behaviors that are downright scary? Don't be afraid...we are all here to help.

This month, let's talk about things that are scary, but don't have to be...

...SCHOOL HAPPENS EVERY DAY, AND YOUR KIDS NEED TO WAKE UP FOR IT. I remember a decade ago when my Kindergartner realized after the first few weeks that school was going to keep happening. She liked school. But getting her up and moving and focused on the tasks at hand (putting on a sock? eating with a utensil?) was painful. Now she is in high school, and the only thing making mornings easier is that she doesn't wear socks. So we save time there. **Pro Tip: Lay the clothes out the night before. Or wear pajamas. It's probably a theme day anyway.**

...BELONGINGS ARE ALREADY LOST, BROKEN, FILTHY, OR REALLY STINKY. Remember all those brand new school supplies? The backpack that zipped? The sparkling clean lunch bag/box all ready to be packed with a healthy lunch? It's only been a few weeks, but I imagine that 52 of the 64 crayons are lost, the new backpack has a giant hole from being dragged across the sidewalk, the PE clothes are on week 6 of "no washing", and there is a stomach-turning odor coming from the lunch bag.* **Pro Tip: Forget about packing. School lunch is free this year! Voila! No stinky lunch bag!**

*I don't have to imagine that last one, because it happened and it used to be a turkey sandwich.

...IT'S TIME TO BUY A COSTUME! (or not?) October means those "Spirit" costume stores pop up overnight like weeds in old Blockbuster Video storefronts. Once kids see the stores, it's game on. I used to try to buy the kids their costumes early to make sure there was a good selection. This worked until they could talk. Then I learned the hard way that the costume they want and must have today is NOT the costume they will still want when they see all of the other costumes that they will want more. I've returned more costumes than I've purchased. Is this even possible? Discuss. **Pro Tip: Whatever you do, don't buy a costume with a mask. Those aren't fun anymore. You know why.**

...THERE'S TOO MUCH CANDY. For all of us. Even my food-allergic daughter would eat too much "safe" candy. Candy is candy. Kids want candy, and trying to convince them that fruit is just as delicious is rarely successful. I admire those who attempt to do so. I have chosen to embrace my failure to limit sugar because, well, pick your battles and all that. But go, you! **Pro Tip: Give the kids a few pieces and hide the rest to be distributed to them later and/or eaten by you in the middle of the night. Or give them an apple. I hear those are just as delicious.**

...TWEENS/TEENS WANT TO DRESS UP LIKE TIKTOK TRENDS AND VIRAL MEMES AND YOU WILL WONDER WHERE DID YOU GO WRONG? Maybe you will recognize them, but I won't. Is it annoying not to be "in" on the joke? Yes. Will I still give them candy if they come to my door? Yes. After they listen to my helpful advice that being "internet famous" is not a viable career option. **Pro Tip: Just give them the candy already. It's not their fault that you are out of touch.**

...HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CAN DRIVE TO THE STORE TO GET CANDY. But some of them still want to go door-to-door asking for it. As long as they are polite, and they aren't knocking down little Tommy as he tries to scale my big step, I truly enjoy seeing the kids in my neighborhood who used to be carried or pushed in their strollers on Halloween, even if their costumes now consist of a hoodie and/or an internet trend (see above.) **Pro Tip: If your kid isn't driving yet, one day they will be. And it will be scary. So when teenagers come to my door, it's fun to say hi to them and pretend that they aren't big, and that everyone, including me, isn't aging rapidly. Now THAT'S scary.**



LINK NOTES!

STAY
"IN THE LOOP"
ON TWITTER!

@OFCSLINK
@OFCSDistrict



TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

Tech Tips for Non-Techy Types

TikTok is everywhere, right? If you haven't seen it (or been dragged into recreating a TikTok dance routine with your kids) you soon will. It is a fast-growing app that allows users to express their talents and share them with other users via 15-60 second videos. Your kids probably love it...but how can parents be sure that it is safe? Like many social media apps, along with the fun, there are some not-so-great things that all parents (yes, the non-techy and techy types alike) should know. Fortunately, National PTA and TikTok have collaborated on a "TikTok Guide for Parents" which contains a glossary of TikTok terms, information on parental controls, privacy, digital well-being, and more. Check it out, and take time to talk to your kids! And if you want to make a dance video, I promise not to laugh (unless it's supposed to be funny!) Here's the link: [TikTokGuideforParents](https://www.tiktok.com/@nationalpta)

SnackScience!

When you need an excuse to snack, turn it into a learning opportunity and congratulate yourself for being so smart!

EDIBLE SILLY PUTTY



INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup corn starch
- 1/2 of 1.55 oz package sugar-free gelatin water

INSTRUCTIONS

- Combine cornstarch and sugar-free Jello powder in a medium mixing bowl.
- Begin adding water to dry ingredients, 2 tablespoons at a time. Stir until a paste begins to form.
- Continue to add water little by little until the silly putty clumps together instead of sticking to the bottom/sides of bowl.
- Finish mixing by hand and play!

Edible Silly Putty recipe and details here:

<https://thesoccermomblog.com/edible-silly-putty/>



SCIENCE OF PARENTHOOD



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WHAT IS LINK?

LINK is an acronym for Learn, Inspire, Nurture, Know. The LINK Program is a district-wide family-community engagement resource. The goal of the program is to connect the Olmsted Falls School District with parents and families, to encourage two-way communication, and to help parents support their children's learning at home.

